

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.-14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) A fuel cell comprising:

an electrolyte membrane; and

a cathode catalyst layer containing a metal catalyst;

an oxidant gas passage that supplies an oxidant gas to the cathode catalyst layer, the oxidant gas passage facing the cathode catalyst layer and comprising a downstream portion and a portion other than the downstream portion that is located upstream of the downstream portion; and

a current extraction portion connected electrically to the cathode catalyst layer,

wherein the cathode catalyst layer ~~faeing~~ facing a surface of the electrolyte membrane in plural regions including a specific region in which a differential electric potential between the cathode catalyst layer and the electrolyte membrane during an electric power generation reaction of the fuel cell is larger than in a region other than the specific region,

wherein one of an amount of the metal catalyst and a specific surface area of the metal catalyst in the cathode catalyst layer in the specific region has a larger value than in the region other than the specific region, and

wherein the specific region includes at least one of: the downstream portion of the oxidant gas passage, a region of the oxidant gas passage, which, during the current generation reaction of the fuel cell, has a temperature lower than in the other regions of the cathode catalyst layer, or, a region of the cathode catalyst layer removed from the current extraction portion.

16. (Previously presented) The fuel cell as defined in Claim 15, wherein the cathode catalyst layer contains catalyst particles each of which comprises a support, and the metal catalyst supported on the support, and wherein an amount of the catalyst particles per unit area of the cathode catalyst layer in the specific region is set to a greater value than in the region other than the specific region.

17. (Withdrawn) The fuel cell as defined in Claim 15, wherein the cathode catalyst layer contains catalyst particles each of which comprises a support, and the metal catalyst supported on the support, and wherein a weight ratio of the metal catalyst to the support is set to a greater value in the specific region than in the region other than the specific region.

18. (Withdrawn) The fuel cell as defined in Claim 17, wherein an amount of the catalyst particles per unit area of the cathode catalyst layer in the specific region is equal to an amount of the catalyst particles per unit area of the cathode catalyst layer in the region other than the specific region.

19. (Withdrawn) The fuel cell as defined in Claim 15, wherein the cathode catalyst layer contains catalyst particles each of which comprises a support, and the metal catalyst supported on the support in the form of minute particles, and wherein the specific surface area of the minute particles of the metal catalyst is set to a greater value in the specific region than in the region other than the specific region.

20. (Withdrawn) The fuel cell as defined in Claim 19, wherein a diameter of the minute particles of the metal catalyst in the specific region is smaller than a diameter of the minute particles of the metal catalyst in the region other than the specific region.

21. (Previously presented) The fuel cell as defined in Claim 15, wherein the specific region is set as a region in which a current density during the electric power generation reaction of the fuel cell is smaller than in the region other than the specific region.

22. (Withdrawn) The fuel cell as defined in Claim 15, wherein the specific region is set as a region in which a moisture content of the electrolyte membrane during the electric power generation reaction of the fuel cell is higher than in the region other than the specific region.

23. (Withdrawn) The fuel cell as defined in Claim 15, wherein the fuel cell further comprises an anode catalyst layer facing another surface of the electrolyte membrane, the fuel cell is constituted to perform electric power generation by means of an

electrochemical reaction through the electrolyte membrane between oxygen in an oxidant gas supplied to the cathode catalyst layer and hydrogen in a fuel gas supplied to the anode catalyst layer, and the specific region is set as a region in which a humidity of one of the oxidant gas and the fuel gas during the electric power generation reaction of the fuel cell is higher than in the region other than the specific region.

24. (Withdrawn) The fuel cell as defined in Claim 15, wherein the fuel cell further comprises an oxidant gas passage which supplies an oxidant gas to the cathode catalyst layer, the oxidant gas passage facing the cathode catalyst layer, and the specific region is set as a region corresponding to a downstream portion of the oxidant gas passage

25. (Withdrawn) The fuel cell as defined in Claim 24, wherein the oxidant gas passage comprises an oxidant gas convergence portion at a point thereon, and the specific region is set in relation to a flow rate of the oxidant gas in the oxidant gas passage as a region directly upstream of the convergence portion and a region corresponding to the downstream portion of the oxidant gas passage, which is removed from the directly upstream region by a gap.

26. (Withdrawn) The fuel cell as defined in Claim 15, wherein the specific region is set as a region in which a temperature of the cathode catalyst layer during the electric power generation reaction of the fuel cell is lower than in the region other than the specific region.

27. (Withdrawn) The fuel cell as defined in Claim 15, wherein the fuel cell further comprises a cooling water passage which cools the fuel cell during the electric power generation reaction, and the specific region is set as a region corresponding to an upstream portion of the cooling water passage.

28. (Withdrawn) The fuel cell as defined in Claim 15, wherein the fuel cell further comprises a current extraction portion connected electrically to the cathode catalyst layer, and the specific region is set as a region removed from the current extraction portion.